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GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Implementation of General Assembly resolutions in the field of disarmament

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/46/150.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 15 December 1989, the General Assembly adopted resolution 44/116 G, in paragraphs 4 and 5 of which the Assembly invited all Member States that had not yet done so to make available to the Secretary-General their views and suggestions on ways and means to enhance the implementation of General Assembly resolutions in the field of disarmament; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session a progress report on the implementation of the present resolution.

2. Pursuant to paragraphs 4 and 5 of the resolution, the Secretary-General, in a note verbale dated 28 January 1991, requested all Member States to communicate to him their views on this matter. To date, the Secretary-General has received replies from Cuba, Liechtenstein, Peru, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Thailand. Other replies will be published as addenda to the present report.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

CUBA

[Original: Spanish]

[7 May 1991]

1. The Cuban Government believes that one of the most effective ways to enhance the implementation of General Assembly resolutions is for all States to comply fully with the agreement reached in the final document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, to the effect that the General Assembly has been and should remain the main organ of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

2. In view of the special responsibility of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, as laid down in the Charter, and since the General Assembly is the most universal and democratic organ in the system, in which all Member States are represented on an equal footing and express their views, it is clear that the recommendations made by the international community should be translated into the necessary political will on the part of States, particularly where such recommendations concern issues closely related to the survival of mankind itself.

3. One particular area that may be cited to illustrate the above view is that of the issue of the cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and a comprehensive ban: the General Assembly has adopted a great number of resolutions on the subject over a period of more than 25 years, but it has not been possible to implement them owing to the reservations and unconstructive attitude of a small number of States, including a number of nuclear Powers.

4. Another way to enhance the implementation of General Assembly resolutions in the field of disarmament is for other organs and organizations in the system dealing with closely related issues to implement or take account more effectively of the resolutions adopted within the framework of the General Assembly.

5. In that connection, it should be noted that the General Assembly has repeatedly urged the Conference on Disarmament to adopt specific disarmament measures in the context of its negotiations on various specific topics, from time to time urging the Conference to assign a high or the utmost priority to such matters. However, that multilateral body for negotiations in the field of disarmament has as yet been unable to respond in a positive manner to the appeals made by the General Assembly, not to speak of taking up negotiations on such matters as nuclear issues - which are of the utmost priority - in the various ad hoc committees, owing to opposition on the part of a number of States members of the committees in question to consideration of and negotiations on specific multilateral disarmament measures relating to such issues.

LIECHTENSTEIN

[Original: English]

[5 February 1991]

Regarding resolutions 44/114 A, 44/115, 44/116 G, 44/116 J, due to the fact that the Principality of Liechtenstein abolished its army in 1868 and has had no military forces since then, the competent Liechtenstein authorities are not in a position to give views and suggestions on the matters contained in the above-mentioned resolutions.

PERU

[Original: Spanish]

[6 August 1991]

1. With regard to paragraph 4 of resolution 44/116 G, adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1989, the Peruvian Government reaffirms its undertaking to continue to promote the adoption of specific measures with a view to strengthening the central role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

2. Accordingly, Peru reaffirms its commitment to the 1978 Final Document and the principal resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the subject. Account must also be taken of the scope and implications of the role of the United Nations system in negotiating processes relating to disarmament issues that have arisen in recent years, particularly between the superpowers and in the conclusion of regional agreements and other such processes or initiatives.

3. Peru believes that the processes in question should not limit but, rather, complement the negotiating activities of the United Nations, so as not to deprive the United Nations of the dynamism that it requires as the main forum in the multilateral system for the achievement of general and complete disarmament.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]

[9 July 1991]

1. The implementation of United Nations resolutions on disarmament is of immediate relevance to the extension of the authority of the Organization. Today, when the United Nations is increasingly functioning as an effective, universal mechanism promoting the formation in States of durable structures of trust and mutual understanding based on a balance of interests, it is becoming especially urgent to improve its working style and methods in all areas, particularly in such a crucial area as multilateral disarmament. A new situation is developing in the United Nations, as more and more States are inclined to regard multilateral disarmament as one of the key means of guaranteeing international security, and to seek universally acceptable solutions to disarmament problems closely adapted to the military and political situation in individual regions and in the international arena as a whole. Attitudes to the resolutions adopted at the United Nations should, in the view of the USSR, be measured by the actual willingness of Member States to comply with the obligations arising from them.

2. One of the most effective means of striking a balance among States' interests is by drafting and adopting decisions at the United Nations on the basis of common consent. As the common opinion of all States Members of the United Nations, consensus resolutions encourage the development of subject-oriented dialogue and the formulation and adoption of effective measures. It would be important therefore to establish consensus as the preferred method of taking decisions at the United Nations, including decisions on disarmament. In the first instance, it would appear that that method should be used in the case of resolutions seeking practical measures to turn back the arms race and create a moral and political climate which would ensure a shift to practical action to limit and reduce military capabilities.

3. It is important that consensus when a resolution is adopted should be matched by consensus when it is put into effect.

4. Improvements on the organizational side, notably making the First Committee more streamlined and efficient, also deserve attention. The Soviet Union shares the view that progress could be made in this direction by combining a number of resolutions, for example, those relating to the general aspects of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war and resolutions expressing support for talks taking place outside the United Nations system. It would also seem advisable to continue work on shifting

consideration of individual resolutions on to a two- or three-yearly basis. The Soviet Union considers the aim of such measures not to be a mechanism for reducing the number of resolutions, but rather as enhancing their authority and effectiveness.

5. As a contribution to disarmament efforts by the international community, the USSR sponsors General Assembly resolutions on a wide range of issues in this area. For instance, at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the USSR sponsored resolutions on, inter alia, the prohibition of the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes, defensive security concepts and policies, and the charting of potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to protect the environment.

6. In response to calls by the General Assembly (resolutions 44/116 B, 44/116 K and 44/112), the USSR provided the Assembly at its forty-fifth session with information on the progress of disarmament talks outside the United Nations system in which it was taking part, and on negotiations between the USSR and the United States of America on the reduction of strategic offensive arms.

7. Soviet representatives are taking part in the work of groups of qualified governmental experts which are preparing United Nations studies on defensive security concepts and policies and on ways and means of promoting transparency in international arms transfers, established under resolutions 45/58 O and 43/75 I.

8. As called for under General Assembly resolution 43/75 G, the Soviet Union has submitted information on its military expenditures, using the United Nations standardized reporting system.

9. We attach great importance to the report of the Secretary-General to be prepared pursuant to resolution 44/116 G. In order to draw up that report, the Secretary-General should receive all the information available and Member States taking part in disarmament talks should keep him regularly informed on all aspects of those talks - without prejudice, naturally, to their confidential character.

10. Further activity by the World Disarmament Campaign and improvements in the ways and methods by which it pursues its goals - to inform, educate and foster public understanding and support for United Nations activities in the field of disarmament - would make a considerable contribution to the consistent implementation of United Nations resolutions on disarmament.

11. The public needs to be kept extensively informed of disarmament resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. The texts of the most important resolutions are published every year in the Soviet press.

12. The Soviet Union is ready for a further constructive exchange of views on practical ways of increasing the effectiveness with which United Nations resolutions on disarmament are put into practice.

THAILAND

[Original: English]

[13 August 1991]

1. The defence doctrine of the Royal Thai Government is defensive in nature. Accordingly, the armed forces are allocated only sufficient budget to ensure its readiness and capability to protect Thailand's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

2. The Royal Thai Government has gradually reduced the percentage of the annual national budget allocated to the Ministry of Defence in recent years. In 1983, the Royal Thai Government appropriated 20.37 per cent of the annual budget to the Ministry of Defence. The budget allocated to defence decreased in successive years, to 18.71 per cent in 1984, 18.46 per cent in 1985, 18.01 per cent in 1986, 17.21 per cent in 1987, 16.91 per cent in 1988 and 15.58 per cent in 1989.

3. Thailand is also of the view that effective regional disarmament can only be brought about by the reduction in the size of the armed forces and military budget of the countries of the region. Moreover, external powers should cease to provide military assistance and arms to countries in the region.